THE GLOBAL COALITION TO ADDRESS SYNTHETIC DRUG THREATS

Implementation and Impact

2023 – 2024

THE GLOBAL COALITION TO ADDRESS SYNTHETIC DRUG THREATS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The success the Global Coalition has achieved since its July 2023 launch would have been impossible without the tireless efforts of a large number of individuals, chief among them the Working Group and Sub-Working Group Co-Chairs:

- **Working Group 1**
  (***West***) U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Chief of Operations William Kimbell and Côte d'Ivoire Secretary General of Interministerial Counternarcotics Committee Yao Kouakou Ronsard Kouma.

  (***East***) New Zealand Police National Organized Crime Group Detective Superintendent Greg Williams and Indian Narcotics Control Bureau Deputy Director General Gyaneshwar Singh.

- **Working Group 2**
  (***West***) U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Overdose Prevention Division Director Grant Baldwin and Italian National Institute of Health Acting Director of the National Center on Addiction and Doping Simona Pichini.

  (***East***) Kyrgyzstan Republican Center for Psychiatry and Narcology Adolescent Services Department Head Tinatin Sagymbaeva and Pakistani Deputy Secretary (International Cooperation) Ministry of Narcotics Control Omer Farooq Alvi.

- **Working Group 3**
  (***West***) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Center for Substance Abuse Prevention Director Chris Jones and Mexican National Commission of Mental Health and Addictions Head Juan Manuel Quijada Gaytán.

(***East***) Filipino Dangerous Drug Board Chairman Catalino Cuy, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Global Health Division Assistant Secretary Sean Starmer, and Australian Department of Health and Aged Care, Ambassador for Regional Health Security Stephanie Williams.

- **Sub-Working Group 1.1**

(***West***) South African Directorate for Priority Crime Investigations, National Chemical Monitoring Coordinator Henning Roodt, South African Narcotics Enforcement Bureau (SANEB) Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI), Brigadier General Devon Naicker and European Union Drugs Agency Risk to Public Safety and Security Unit Head of Sector Andrew Cunningham.

(***East***) Indian Narcotics Control Bureau Deputy General Monica Ashish Batra and Kazakhstan Ministry of Internal Affairs, Department on Countering Drugs Crime, Division on Countering Illicit Trafficking of Narcotics, Psychotropic Substances, Analogues, and Precursors Deputy Head Dulat Mukametrakhimov.

- **Sub-Working Group 1.2**

(***West***) Polish Police Central Bureau of Investigation Organized Crime Department Head Michal Aleksandrowicz and U.S. Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Protection New York Field Office Assistant Director George Pasiakos.

(***East***) Australian Federal Police Crime Strategies, Crime Command Detective Superintendent Anthony Conway, Fijian Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration Permanent Secretary Mason Smith and Fijian Ministry of Home Affairs Narcotics Deputy Director Esili Nadolo.

- **Sub-Working Group 2.1**

(***West***) South African Medical Research Council Mental Health, Alcohol, Substance Use and Tobacco Research Unit Director Charles Parry and Canadian Drug Analysis Services of Health Director Benoit Archambault.

(***East***) Indonesian Directorate General of Corrections Coordinator of Special Healthcare and Rehabilitation Heddy Widiastuti and Kazakhstani General Prosecutor's Office, Academy of Law Enforcement Agencies Rakhmatulla Balashov.

- **Sub-Working Group 2.2**

(***West***) Colombian Ministry of Justice and Law, Head of Drug Observatory Jenny Fagua and UK Department for Health and Social Care Office for Health Improvement and Disparities Director for Drug Strategies Natasha Burgon and Deputy Director for Drug Strategy Claire Amal.

(***East***) Fijian Senior Superintendent of Police, Director of Narcotics Bureau Serupepeli Neiko and Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission Director of Drugs Data Collection Amber Mingus and Principal Advisor on Drugs Shane Neilson.

- **Sub-Working Group 3.1**

(***West***) Icelandic Expert Prevention Delegate Inga Dóra Sigfúsdóttir and Chilean National Service for Prevention and Rehabilitation of Drug and Alcohol Use Chief of Prevention Carolina Bruce.

(***East***) Filipino Bureau of Learner Support Services School Health Division Chief Health Program Officer Maria Corazon Dumlao and Seychellean Ministry of Health Human Resources and Administration Director General Yvana Theresine.

- **Sub-Working Group 3.2**
  (***West***) Peruvian Ministry of Health Mental Health Division Director Yuri Cutipe and French Interministerial Mission to Combat Drugs and Addictive Behaviors President Nicolas Prisse.
  (***East***) Indonesian National Narcotics Board Director of Strengthening Community Rehabilitation Centers Amrita Devi and Deputy Director of Rehabilitation Riza Sarasvita, and All India Institute of Medical Sciences Professor of Psychiatry Yatan Pal Singh Balhara.

- **Sub-Working Group 3.3**
  (***West***) Costa Rican Judiciary Restorative Justice Program Coordinator Jovanna Calderón Altamirano and Trinidad and Tobago High Court Judge Geoffrey Henderson.
  (***East***) Kazakhstani Republican Scientific and Practical Center of Mental Health Deputy Chief Executive Officer for Strategic Development Daulet Baipiesov and Filipino Department of Justice Office of the City Prosecutor Makati Heinous Crimes Division Senior Assistant City Prosecutor Aris S. Manguera.

The support of various international organizations was indispensable, particularly the work of the coordinators who helped plan and facilitate the monthly Sub-Working Group calls:

UNODC

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- Hernan Epstein
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- Wadih Maalouf
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The Colombo Plan

- Jo Choong Lean Keow
- George Murimi
- Camila Patino

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- Marya Hynes
- Elisa Rubini
- Jose Luis Vasquez

The success of the first 18 months of the Coalition derived from the tireless efforts of the more than **1,600** subject-matter experts from **163** countries who participated in Working Group, Sub-Working Group, and other meetings.

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FOREWORD

To the U.S. Congress and Members of the International Community:

This report is the product of an unprecedented international effort over the past 18 months to address the increasingly global and multifaceted public health and security threats posed by synthetic drugs. In July 2023, the United States launched the *Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats* to provide a foundation to combine efforts to prevent the production and trafficking of illicit synthetic drugs, identify emerging drug trends and use patterns, and respond to their public health impacts. This report provides an overview of the Global Coalition's critical steps in its first 18 months to craft a comprehensive strategy for tackling the near- and long-term challenges posed by synthetic drugs. I am especially grateful for the valuable contributions made by more than 1,600 subject matter experts from 163 countries who contributed to the successful first 18 months of the Global Coalition. This progress would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of the Coalition's Working Group and Sub-Working Group co-chairs, the coordinators from international organizations, and officials at the U.S. State Department and across the U.S. government who facilitated meetings and ensured that the many moving parts of the Global Coalition stayed on track. This spirit of global cooperation must now be extended to the difficult but necessary work that lies ahead with swift implementation of the many recommendations, proposals, and initiatives contained in this report. Continued cooperation is vital – this is the very definition of a problem that no one country can solve alone. On behalf of those Americans and communities across our nation, and the millions more around the world, most directly impacted by the epidemic of synthetic drugs, I ask for your continued help and support.

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20515

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats* was created in response to a significant shift in the illicit production of drugs. The drug overdose crisis in the United States and in populations around the world is fueled by a continuing integration of synthetic drug compounds into the world's illicit supply of drugs. These synthetic drug threats continue to evolve at alarming speeds. Beyond fentanyl, a synthetic opioid responsible for a large number of overdose deaths in the United States, many countries are confronted with a complex array of synthetic cathinones, cannabinoids, and benzodiazepines, to name a few. Drug cartels are enlisting teams of sophisticated chemists to develop highly potent, ever-changing, and often lethal mixtures in clandestine laboratories around the globe.

The national security and public health threats posed by synthetic drugs are global, complex, and urgent. That is why U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken launched the *Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats* on July 7, 2023, to raise awareness at the global level and support increased country and joint action in response. The Coalition effectively united the international community around this emerging issue, with 163 countries, 15 international organizations, and over 1,600 subject-matter experts participating by the end of the Coalition's first 18 months. In addition to governmental participation, the Coalition has served as a framework for engagement with civil society, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations, universities, and other critical stakeholders.

> The following report provides an overview of Global Coalition efforts in its first 18 months. While the efforts to date represent a solid beginning that is achieving specific outcomes, success requires continued efforts over the long term.

First, the Coalition acknowledged that no simple solution exists for addressing the synthetic drug crisis. To ensure long-term success, a comprehensive approach is needed that includes efforts to reduce supply as well as the demand that fuels the synthetic drug market. On the supply front, the Coalition's discussions and recommendations encourage law enforcement agencies to adapt to new challenges of interdiction and detection with

more informed supply-reduction strategies, to consider new tools to address the business model of synthetics, and to prioritize international cooperation. At the same time, actions and measures to effectively prevent harmful drug use and treat substance use disorders are critical, including increasing access to person-centered and comprehensive treatment services, including medications for opioid use disorders, psychosocial treatment, and overdose reversal medicines such as naloxone.

During the Coalition's first year, the Working Groups developed **68 core recommendations**. International organizations complemented these recommendations by developing their own list of more than **120 specific initiatives** and actions for consideration and implementation by participating countries. These recommendations, and corresponding initiatives and actions, will guide Coalition activities moving forward.

Fourth, Coalition participants acknowledged that even when resources are abundant, countries must be prepared to take every opportunity to leverage political will and that achieving success will require collaboration, cooperation, and perseverance. This is why at the September 24, 2024 Summit of the Global Coalition at the UN General Assembly, President Biden and Secretary Blinken called upon Coalition countries to commit to a pledge to support the tenets of the Coalition (see Appendices 5 and 6).

Second, the Coalition acknowledged the scope of unprecedented challenges in drug detection, including those faced by forensic drug laboratories working on the front lines. Coalition experts have tackled difficult questions such as how to best assist forensic lab directors to respond to shifts in the composition of synthetic drug products in illicit markets and how to effectively combat drug cartels whose operations may exploit vulnerabilities in national drug analysis systems.

Third, Coalition discussions revealed that the level of investment required to bring about systemic change at a national level is greater than national resource levels permit in many cases. The Global Coalition presents us with the opportunity to strengthen our partnerships, rebalance priorities, and make long-term commitments to address the threats presented by synthetic drugs through adequate resourcing.

This report provides an overview of Global Coalition efforts in the first 18 months. The work to date has built a new platform for cooperation, begun to transform joint and national responses, and provided a sound foundation for long-term efforts to achieve specific outcomes.

On September 1, 2023, the Coalition kicked off its first session of three Working Groups, which together reflected a comprehensive and balanced approach based on preventing the illicit manufacture and trafficking of synthetic drugs, detecting emerging threats, and promoting evidence-based public health responses. Meetings were held in the Western and Eastern Hemispheres, with interpretation in English, Spanish, Arabic, French, Portuguese, and Russian. The Working Groups were further expanded into seven Sub-Working Groups to focus on priority elements of the principal workstreams.

Over the past 18 months, the Coalition

Working Groups moved through an intense, multi-phase meeting schedule: a one-month phase for framing each issue; a four-month phase of sharing best practices and models, identifying intervention points, deliverables, and commitments; a four-month phase of action planning and implementation; and a phase of evaluation and transition to ensure sustainability.

Concurrent to global Working Group meetings, in November 2023 the Coalition launched its website, www.globalcoalition.us. The website provides up-to-date information regarding the formation and timeline of the Coalition, videos of presentations during the Sub-Working Group calls, the recommendations and other major documents stemming from the Coalition's work, and a social media element to help exchange ideas between participants.

During the Coalition's first year, the Working Groups developed 68 core recommendations. International organizations complemented these recommendations by developing their own list of more than 120 specific initiatives and actions for consideration and implementation by participating countries. These recommendations, and the corresponding initiatives and actions, will guide the Coalition activities moving forward.

Finally, during this first foundational 18 months, the Coalition has successfully raised the international profile of the synthetic drug threat and underscored the need for cooperative action to address it. Through the Coalition Working Groups, coupled with actions in international forums such as the United Nations General Assembly and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, a global alarm has been sounded, drawing much-needed attention to this growing challenge. The Coalition has also established strong networks within and between Working Group and Sub-Working Group participants, and monthly Sub-Working Group calls have placed the world's premiere subject-matter experts on synthetic drugs in direct contact with one another. The value of these connections – for sharing information, comparing notes, and alerting on emerging trends – cannot be overemphasized as we move forward together in solidarity.

INTRODUCTION

Synthetic drugs are the number one killer of Americans aged 18 to 45. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated over 111,000 people died by drug overdose in the United States in 2022, with the overwhelming majority of these overdoses – over 73,000 or approximately 70 percent – involving synthetic opioids such as fentanyl. While the U.S. domestic drug crisis has been well documented, the United States is not alone in facing the threats presented by the proliferation of synthetic drugs. Globally, synthetic drug threats are on the rise. The types of synthetic drugs that afflict other countries and the scale of the problem may vary, but in every region use, dependence, and overdoses involving synthetic drugs are rising rapidly. While the United States is facing a fentanyl problem, the Near and Middle East is dealing with captagon, North and West Africa and parts of Central Asia are challenged by tramadol, and Asia as well as other portions of the world are confronting methamphetamine.

CHALLENGES POSED BY SYNTHETIC DRUGS

- Can be made anywhere in the world, doesn't require land to grow
- Widespread availability of ingredients due to dual use nature
- Highly potent
- Transported via sea, air, land -- can be sent straight to consumer's doorstep

The evolution from plant-based drugs to synthetic drugs is changing the nature of the drug trade. To produce synthetic drugs, there is no need for large swathes of acreage. Essential ingredients needed for synthetic drug manufacture are cheap and widely available and production times have been reduced from months to hours or days. Chemical development is rapid and nearly unlimited as criminals alter drugs to elude controls. Illicitly manufactured synthetic drugs are often designed to be more potent than plant-based drugs like cocaine or heroin. Given the high potency of many synthetic drugs, a lesser dosage is needed to produce a similar high, facilitating smuggling but also increasing the risk of fatal overdose or other harmful health effects. With a basic understanding of synthetic chemistry and access to precursor chemicals, all one needs is a small lab to produce these dangerous drugs at scale. The low-cost, decreased risk of detection, and flexibility to experiment

Provisional data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that between August 2023 and July 2024, approximately 94,000 people died from drug overdoses in the United States. This represents roughly 17 percent fewer fatal overdoses compared to the preceding 12-month period from August 2022 to July 2023.

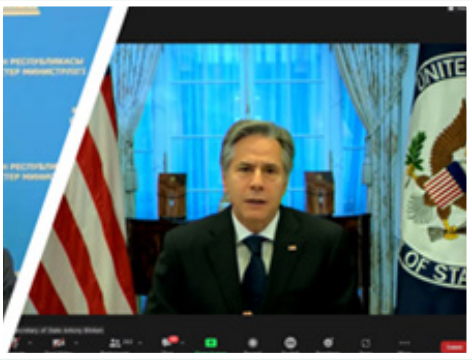
with new synthetic methods and precursor chemicals render synthetic drug production extremely profitable for transnational criminal organizations (TCOs). Existing international drug control efforts, designed primarily to counter diversion of legitimately produced pharmaceutical products as well as production and trafficking of plant-based drugs, have struggled to keep pace with this new illicit business model.

Recognizing that expedited, unified, and increased global cooperation was needed to address this global shift in illicit drug production and trafficking methods, Secretary of State Antony Blinken called for the creation of a *Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats*, as an international effort designed to produce immediate action and speed up the global response to the rise in synthetic drug threats.

The Global Coalition serves to frame the narrative on how to respond to this ongoing crisis. It was clear that immediate action was needed, and that no country could address this problem alone. The Global Coalition is well positioned to advance coordinated international action against the threats posed by synthetic drugs, presenting an opportunity for real, meaningful, global progress.

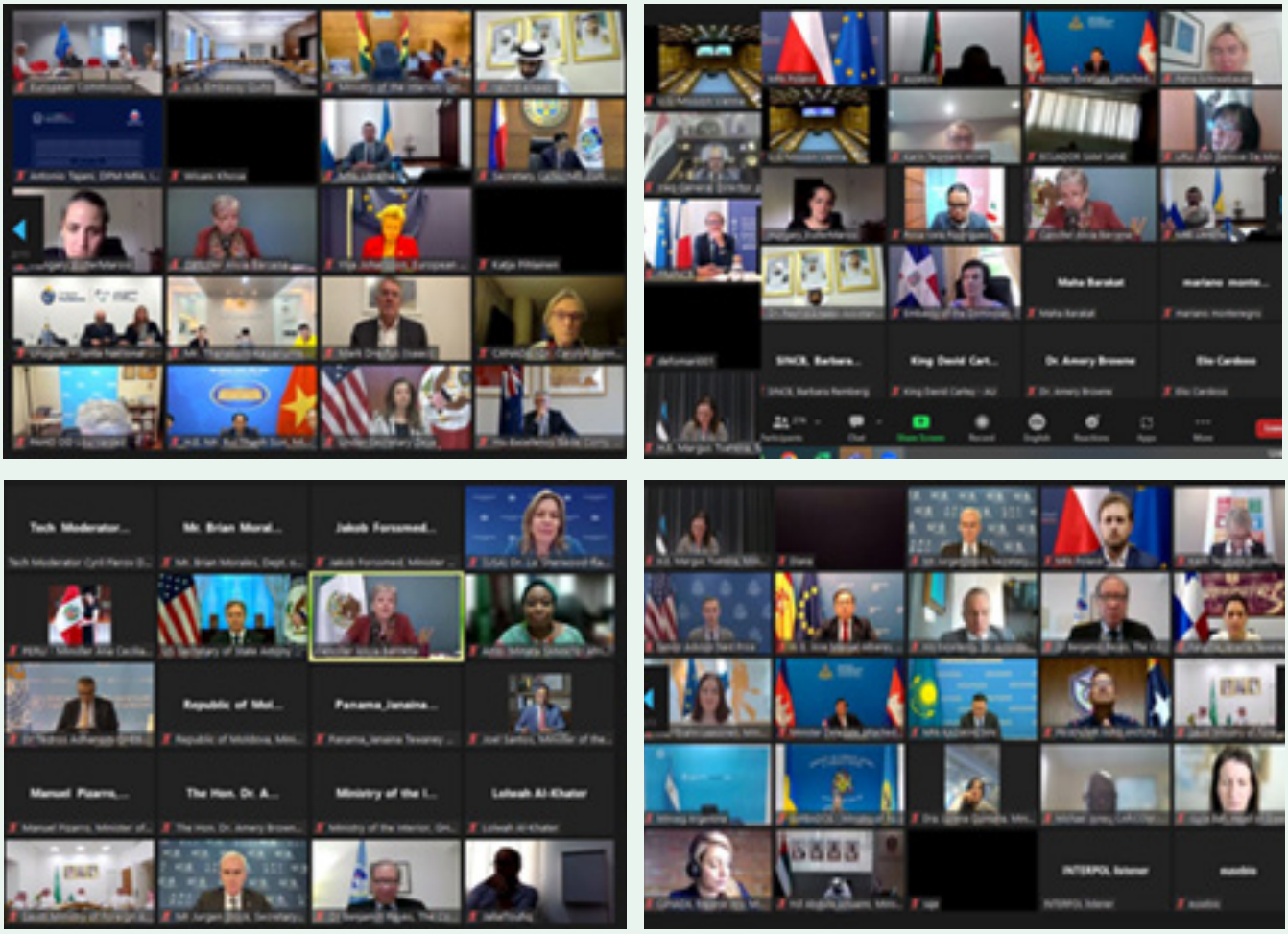
CREATION OF A GLOBAL COALITION

> **"The criminal organizations that traffic synthetic drugs are extremely adept at exploiting weak links in our interconnected global system. When one government aggressively restricts a precursor chemical, traffickers simply buy it elsewhere. When one country closes off a transit route, traffickers quickly shift to another. This is the definition of a problem that no country can solve alone. That is why we are creating this Global Coalition."**



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken
July 7, 2023

Secretary of State Antony Blinken launched the *Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats* at a ministerial-level meeting on July 7, 2023. Over 80 countries participated and signed onto a Ministerial Declaration on Accelerating and Strengthening the Global Response to Synthetic Drugs (see Appendix I). The high level of participation made clear the resolve of the global community to urgently counter the challenges posed by synthetic drugs. The Global Coalition has built on this international commitment to take action at the national, regional, and international levels, maintaining momentum and reaching several key benchmarks since its launch.

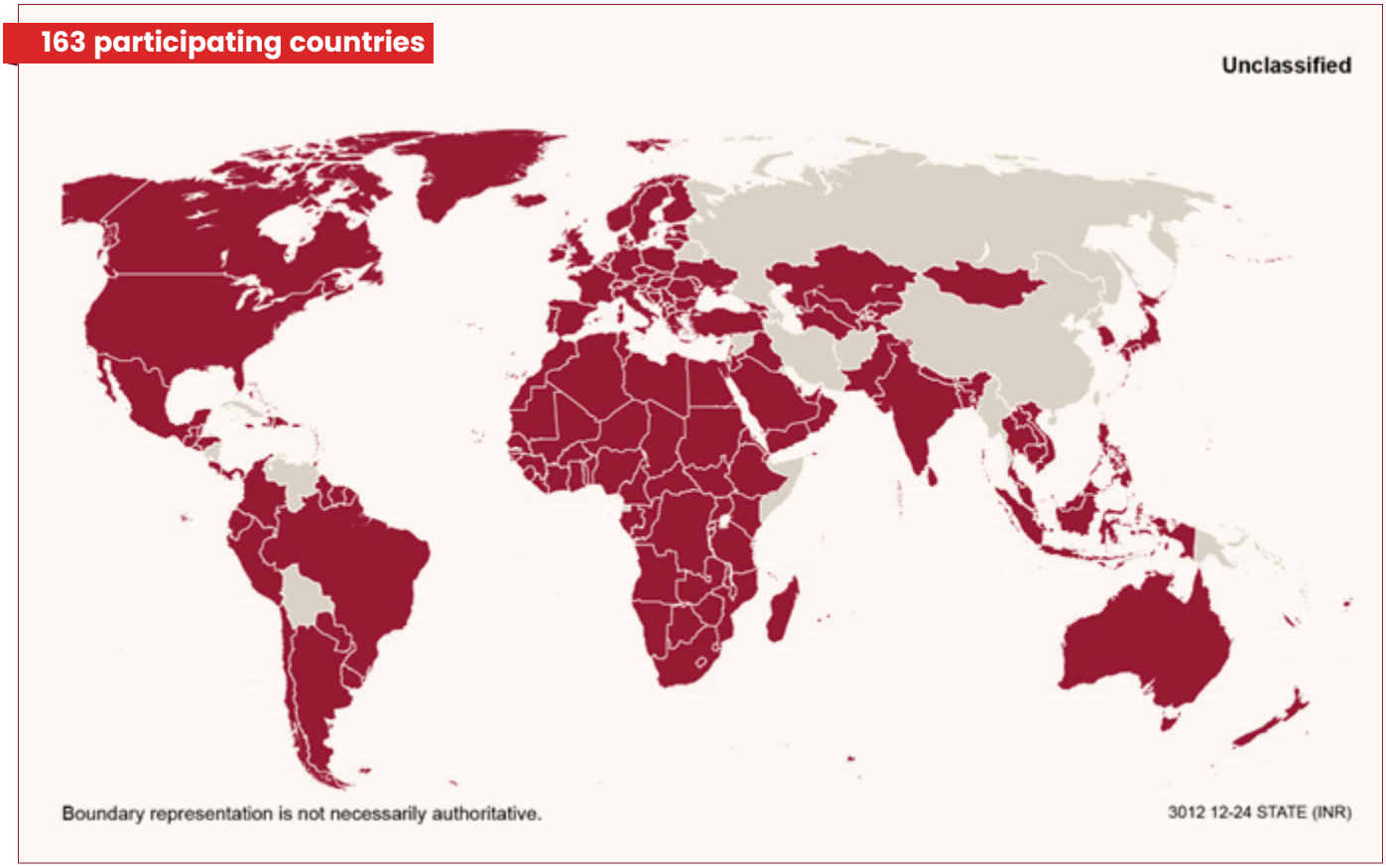


Participants to the July 7 Ministerial Event launching the Global Coalition.

The Global Coalition successfully united countries worldwide in a concerted effort to address the challenges posed by illicitly manufactured and trafficked synthetic drugs. By fostering international cooperation, sharing data, lessons learned, practical tools, and best practices, the Global Coalition established new links between international law enforcement and public health partners, exported country-specific model interventions, and took collective action to counter the synthetic drug crisis globally.

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

163 participating countries

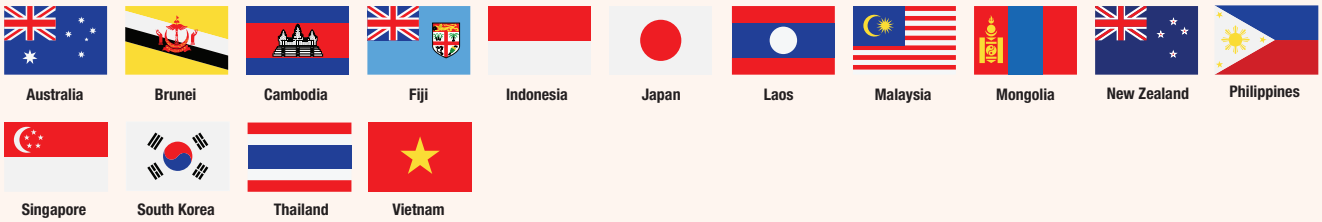


AFRICA

Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Angola | Benin | Botswana | Burkina Faso | Burundi | Cabo Verde | Cameroon | Central African Republic | Chad | Comoros | Côte d'Ivoire | Democratic Republic of the Congo | Djibouti | Eritrea | Eswatini | Ethiopia | Gabon | The Gambia | Ghana | Guinea | Guinea-Bissau | Kenya | Lesotho | Liberia | Madagascar | Malawi | Mali | Mauritania | Mauritius | Mozambique | Namibia | Niger | Nigeria | Republic of the Congo | Rwanda | Senegal | Seychelles | Sierra Leone | South Africa | South Sudan | Sudan | Tanzania | Togo | Uganda | Zambia | Zimbabwe **(46)**

EAST ASIAN PACIFIC

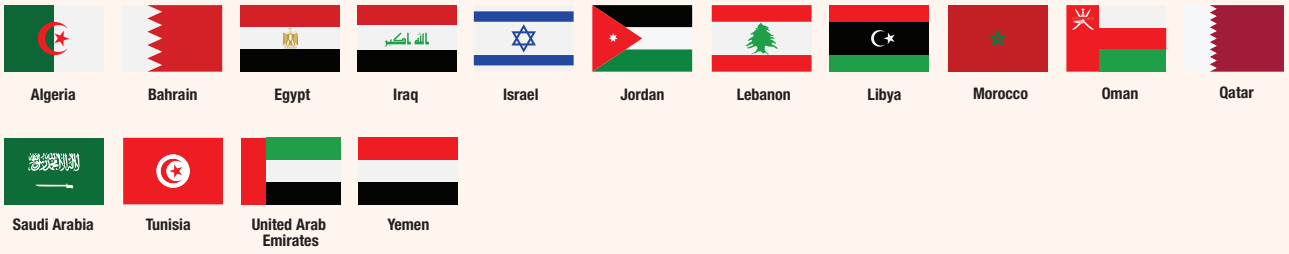


Australia | Brunei | Cambodia | Fiji | Indonesia | Japan | Laos | Malaysia | Mongolia | New Zealand | Philippines | Singapore | South Korea | Thailand | Vietnam **(15)**

EUROPE

Albania | Andorra | Armenia | Austria | Belgium | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Bulgaria | Croatia | Cyprus | Czechia | Denmark | Estonia | Finland | France | Georgia | Germany | Greece | The Holy See | Hungary | Iceland | Ireland | Italy | Kosovo | Latvia | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Malta | Moldova | Montenegro | Netherlands | North Macedonia | Norway | Poland | Portugal | Romania | Serbia | Slovakia | Slovenia | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | Turkey | Ukraine | United Kingdom | **(44)** | and European Union

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA



Algeria | Bahrain | Egypt | Iraq | Israel | Jordan | Lebanon | Libya | Morocco | Oman | Qatar | Saudi Arabia | Tunisia | United Arab Emirates | Yemen **(15)**

SOUTH CENTRAL ASIA

Bangladesh | Bhutan | India | Kazakhstan | Kyrgyzstan | Maldives | Nepal | Pakistan | Sri Lanka | Tajikistan | Turkmenistan | Uzbekistan **(12)**

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Antigua and Barbuda | Argentina | The Bahamas | Barbados | Belize | Brazil | Canada | Chile | Colombia | Costa Rica | Dominica | Dominican Republic | Ecuador | El Salvador | Grenada | Guatemala | Guyana | Haiti | Honduras | Jamaica | Mexico | Panama | Paraguay | Peru | Saint Kitts and Nevis | Saint Lucia | Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | Suriname | Trinidad and Tobago | United States | Uruguay **(31)**

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (15)

African Union

Organization of American States (OAS)/Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD)

Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

The Colombo Plan

International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)

Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)

Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)

Pompidou Group

United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

World Customs Organization (WCO)

World Health Organization (WHO)

If you would like to convey your country's interest in participating in the Coalition, please reach out to syntheticscoalition@state.gov.

More information can be obtained from the Global Coalition website, www.globalcoalition.us.

Participation in the Global Coalition is voluntary, reflected through the registration of one or more officials in the Coalition's Working Groups/Sub-Working Groups. All Global Coalition participants recognize the growing public health and security threats of synthetic drugs and support national, regional, and international actions to address them. Officials participating in the Global Coalition were able to allocate their efforts to any or all Working Groups in accordance with national priorities and resources. As a result, some countries had participants join only one or two of the Working Groups while others had participants join all three Working Groups.

Participation by international organizations was somewhat different. International organizations provided subject-matter experts who helped prepare for and facilitate the monthly Sub-Working Group calls. Multiple programs and initiatives arising from the Global Coalition are being implemented with support from some of these international organizations.

www.globalcoalition.us

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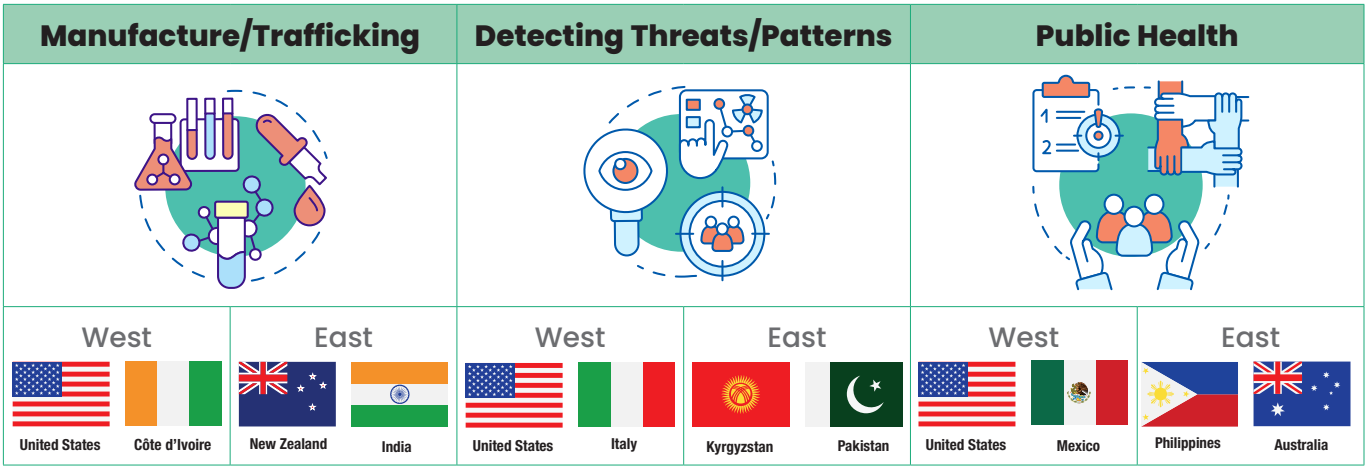
Leaders' Summit of the Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats
President Biden hosted the Summit of the Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drugs on September 24, 2024, during the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly. Since its inception in July 2023, the Global Coalition has grown to include 163 countries and 15 international organizations working together to disrupt the supply chain for fentanyl and other synthetic drugs; detect emerging drug threats; and prevent and treat through effective public health interventions.
With the Summit as a motivating force, 11 Coalition countries – Australia, Belgium, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, India, Italy, Mexico, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom – announced new initiatives that will advance the work of the Coalition, including efforts to disrupt the supply chain of fentanyl and enhance public health interventions.
These 11 countries also signed a Coalition Pledge agreeing to take additional actions to regulate all relevant drugs and precursor chemicals, take needed steps to fill gaps in their own domestic authorities, expand public-private partnerships to more effectively combat the supply chain for illicit fentanyl, develop mechanisms to monitor real-time data on trends in illicit drug use, and expand access to

WORKING AND SUB-WORKING GROUPS

Initial Global Coalition participants agreed to take a comprehensive and balanced approach across three overarching themes designed to: prevent the illicit manufacture and trafficking of synthetic drugs; detect emerging threats; and promote public health responses. These themes became the focus of the three Working Groups and seven Sub-Working Groups.

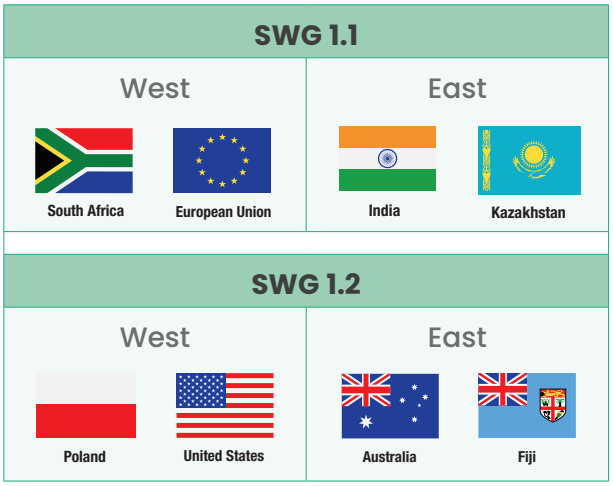


Working Group 1: Preventing the Illicit Manufacture and Trafficking of Synthetic Drugs

The Coalition seeks to curb the illicit production and trafficking of synthetic drugs such as fentanyl, tramadol, methamphetamine, captagon, MDMA, and ketamine. By working together, participating countries aim to disrupt illicit supply chains and prevent these dangerous substances from reaching communities.

- **Sub-Working Group 1.1: Manufacturing of Synthetic Drugs and their Precursors**
  Sub-Working Group 1.1 focuses on strategies to address the initial steps in the drug supply process. This includes addressing elements associated with the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs.

- **Sub-Working Group 1.2: Trafficking of Synthetic Drugs**
  Sub-Working Group 1.2 focuses on building states' capacities to counter the trafficking of synthetic drugs within their countries, across shared borders, and around the globe.



Working Group 2: Detecting Emerging Drug Threats and Use Patterns

The Coalition recognizes the importance of identifying new synthetic drug trends and patterns as they emerge. By staying informed about emerging threats, participating countries can respond proactively and implement effective strategies to mitigate risks to public health and security.

- **Sub-Working Group 2.1: Data Collection, Analysis, and Trends Including Early Warning**
  Development of impactful strategies to address synthetic drugs requires timely and detailed data covering a broad range of trends and activities, including consumption patterns, drug use consequences, prevention, harm reduction, treatment, recovery, drug production, transportation and distribution by drug trafficking organizations, and more.

- **Sub-Working Group 2.2: Information Sharing, Interagency Collaboration and Policy Formulation**
  Data systems and research must be maintained, enhanced, and supplemented so drug control practitioners, researchers, and policymakers are continually informed by the most up to date and accurate information.

Working Group 3: Promoting Public Health Interventions and Services to Prevent and Reduce Drug Use, Overdose, and Other Health Related Problems

The Coalition emphasizes public health responses to prevent and reduce drug use, overdose, and related harms. By collaborating on evidence-based interventions, countries can better protect their citizens from the adverse effects of synthetic drugs.

- **Sub-Working Group 3.1: Preventing Drug Use, Strengthening and Expanding Evidence-Based Prevention Activities**
  Prevention and early intervention strategies can reduce the impact of substance use and related crime and violence. Prevention activities educate and support individuals and communities to prevent the use and misuse of drugs and the development of substance use disorders.

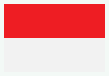
- **Sub-Working Group 3.2: Engaging People with Substance Use and Substance Use Disorders**
  Sub-Working Group 3.2 covered a range of treatment topics in a continuum of care such as drug treatment services and

systems development, recovery support, harm reduction, and the needs of care providers for training and credentialing the workforce, expanding services, and ensuring quality service delivery.

- **Sub-Working Group 3.3: Addressing Populations in Contact with the Criminal Justice System, including Alternatives to Incarceration**
  When addressing the needs of individuals with substance use disorder (SUD) who are in contact with the justice system, both public health and public safety factors must be addressed. Sub-Working Group 3.3 included professionals from both the health and justice sectors and reviewed international policies and frameworks, data, challenges, and good practices to generate ideas on opportunities to intervene at multiple steps along the justice continuums.

Working Groups East and West

To accommodate worldwide time zones, the Global Coalition created two sets of Working Groups and Sub-Working Groups. Working Group East consisted of countries from Asia and the Pacific and had translation services offered in English and Russian. Working Group West consisted of countries from the Americas, Europe, and Africa and provided translation services in English, Spanish, Arabic, French, and Portuguese.

SWG 3.1		SWG 3.2		SWG 3.3	
West	East	West	East	West	East
Iceland Chile	Philippines Seychelles	Peru France	 Indonesia India	Costa Rica Trinidad and Tobago	Kazakhstan Philippines

WORKING GROUPS LAUNCH

On September 1, 2023, the Coalition kicked off its first session of the Working Groups. Participants identified specific priority facets of the synthetic drug issue which would ultimately form the basis for seven action-oriented Sub-Working Groups that would meet monthly at the practitioner/technical level to share experiences, reinforce best practices, identify opportunities for peer learning and assistance, and galvanize national and joint action.

2023 UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNGA)

On September 18, 2023, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken convened world leaders for an event on "Addressing the Public Health and Security Threats of Synthetic Drugs Through Global Cooperation" on the margins of the 78th UN General Assembly (UNGA). Over 100 representatives from governments, international organizations, civil society, and private sector participated.

UNODC Executive Director Ghada Waly moderated a panel discussion on opportunities for the Global Coalition to enhance international cooperation. The event emphasized that synthetic drugs have become a global challenge, and all countries may experience severe harms from these threats if the international community does not immediately take action. Panelists from the European Commission, Brazil, and Meta voiced strong support for the Global Coalition.

In his remarks, Secretary Blinken announced that the United States would sponsor a synthetic drugs resolution in the UN General Assembly, as well as a new partnership with technology companies. This event served as the second high-level political touchpoint in the life of the Global Coalition and reinforced global, high-level attention to address synthetic drug threats. It also highlighted and conveyed political support and momentum and formalized the Global Coalition's three lines of effort.

On December 18, 2023, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 78/131, entitled "Enhancing action at the national, regional and international levels to address the global public health and security challenges posed by synthetic drugs," further spotlighting synthetic drugs as a global problem necessitating a timely and unified international response.

GLOBAL COALITION FORMAT AND TIMELINE

MEETING SCHEDULE

PHASE	WEST	EAST
I. Framing the Issue	October 17–18	October 25–26
II. Sharing Best Practices and Models, Identifying Intervention Points, Deliverables and Commitments	November 14–15 December 19–20 January 24–25 February 20–21	November 21–22 December 13–14 January 17–18 February 14-15
III. Mid-Term Coalition Working Group Meeting	March 6	March 7
IV. Action Planning, Implementation	April 23–24 May 21–22 June 18-19 July 23–24	April 17–18 May 15–16 June 12-13 July 17–18
V. Evaluation and Transitioning for Sustainability	August 13–14	August 7–8
VI. One Year Review Working Group Meeting	September 5	September 6

OCTOBER **2023**

In October 2023, the Global Coalition held the first meetings of its seven Sub-Working Groups. Co-Chairs facilitated discussions regarding objectives, the challenges to be addressed, and how each group would measure progress. Presentations by international subject-matter experts provided an overview of the global landscape of each thematic area and the latest innovations and opportunities.

NOVEMBER **2023** – FEBRUARY **2024**

Between November 2023 and February 2024, Sub-Working Group meetings featured presentations showcasing specific global programs and projects for governments to consider participating in or adopting. Meetings familiarized participants with best practices at national levels that could be expanded in other regional or global fora. As meetings progressed and gaps were identified, participants conceptualized new initiatives that could respond to these needs. As a result of these Phase II sessions, policy recommendations were developed to improve how some of these international systems, processes, and tools work together to achieve sustainable progress.

MARCH
2024

On March 6, 2024, the Coalition met for the second time at the Working Group level. Sub-Working Group Co-Chairs provided mid-year reports. The session also offered an opportunity for participants to review draft recommendations.

APRIL -JULY
2024

From April to July 2024, the Global Coalition focused on implementing the best practices and experiences identified during Phase II and translating them into action. Coalition participants were invited to join programs offered by international organizations and other partners to increase their own capacity, to contribute to capacity building programs, to draft policy and legislation, to enter into commitments domestically or with each other, to engage with the private sector and civil society, and/or to develop national action plans. Coalition co-chairs met (in person for the first time) in June 2024 in Thessaloniki, Greece to review the first year of the Coalition and discuss the roadmap for its second year.

AUGUST
2024

August 2024, the final month of the Sub-Working Group meetings, focused on transitioning the Global Coalition's work. Coalition participants made commitments to operationalize some of the initiatives and opportunities identified throughout the past year. These initiatives will be supported by international organizations, governments, or a consortium of public and/or private sector institutions. Through integration with these other networks, the work of the Global Coalition continues.

2024 UN COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS (CND)

Coalition participants and supporters convened on the margins of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) in March 2024. The CND will remain a major driving force in coordinating sustained global action to address these challenges given its leading role within the UN system for international drug-related matters.

Secretary Blinken led the U.S. delegation to the High-Level Segment of the CND and joined the Ghanian Chair's Pledge4Action Initiative, announcing the United States would pledge $100 million to support international efforts to address synthetic drug threats. He urged countries to work together to halt the spread of synthetic drugs by regulating precursor chemicals used in their illicit manufacture, redoubling efforts to reduce overdose deaths, deepening collaboration with key non-governmental actors, and intensifying international cooperation through initiatives like the Global Coalition. Government, media, and civil society alike recognized the significance of Secretary Blinken's participation at the CND – the first for a U.S. Secretary of State. During a roundtable discussion on priorities for the CND for the next five years, Ambassador Todd Robinson, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, delivered a statement on behalf of the then 145 participating countries of the Global Coalition.

The CND featured two side events on the Global Coalition. One provided an overview and update. A second focused on donor coordination discussions. Additionally, the Global Coalition launched the International Consortium for Alternatives to Incarceration (ICATI) on the margins of the CND. The network has since provided technical support to Global Coalition members and closely supported the discussions of Sub-Working Group 3.3. The organization's website is https://www.icati.org.

ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Coalition participants recognized that engagement with civil society, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations, universities, and others, serves as a force multiplier and is necessary for success in addressing synthetic drugs.

ENGAGEMENT WITH BUSINESS:

Value of Engagement with the Private Sector

To effectively counter the persistent threat of fentanyl and other synthetic drugs, "we've got to get countries involved, we have to get the private sector involved because these chemicals are made, manufactured, and shipped," Secretary Blinken explained during the 2023 Cities Summit of the Americas.

Coalition discussions noted the importance of engagement with key stakeholders within the private sector. In light of the business model for synthetics, six industries emerged as particularly important: chemical, shipping, consignment, social media, e-commerce, and banking. While there were no formal Global Coalition meetings specifically on the private sector, industry was represented at the September 2023 synthetics event convened by U.S. Secretary of State Blinken on the margins of the UNGA. Likewise, several international organizations carrying forward a supporting role for the Coalition advanced relevant tools and initiatives relevant to the key role of business, in many cases as Coalition deliverables. Just a few indicative examples include:

- In 2023, the U.S. Department of State, in coordination with the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) Mexico, convened private sector workshops on synthetic drugs, including a July 11 presentation on illicit synthetic drug trafficking with a group of 30 private sector participants from industries including pharmaceuticals, transportation and logistics, banking, and private security resulted in participants recommending a broad engagement strategy to effectively inform stakeholders of risks and best practices to curb synthetic drug trafficking.
- In September 2023, the INCB Global Rapid Interdiction of Dangerous Substances (GRIDS) Program held an operational

meeting to counter trafficking of synthetic opioids, dangerous substances and chemicals through postal, express courier, and air cargo services, bringing together over 100 officers, experts, and industry leaders from over 30 governments, private sector partners and international organizations.

- In February 2024, the U.S. Department of State in coordination with the American Chamber of Commerce organized roundtable discussions with the chemical and transportation industries to highlight how the private sector can help the fight against synthetic drug trafficking.
- In February 2024, the GRIDS Programme held its first global Workshop on Advanced Targeting with Postal, Express Courier, and Air Cargo Industries in Vienna, Austria. Over 100 officers and experts from 62 governments, international organizations, and private sector leaders attended to discuss actions to counter trafficking of emerging synthetic drugs, dangerous new psychoactive substances (NPS), opioids and related chemicals in the express transport sector.
- In February 2024, INCB hosted the Regional Workshop on the Prevention and Interdiction of Synthetic Opioids and NPS through Sea Freights in the United Arab Emirates.
- In March 2024, UNODC developed and presented the Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) module of the UN Toolkit on Synthetic Drugs. This provides stakeholders with over 40 practical resources to help establish and operate PPPs addressing synthetic drugs, see https://syntheticdrugs.unodc.org/syntheticdrugs/en/ppp/index.html
- In March 2024, the INCB GRIDS program held the Tech Against Trafficking event, bringing together global industry leaders and governments for the first time to address cross-platform exploitation by traffickers across various online sectors and services. Seventy officers, experts, and officials from member states, international organizations, and private sector leaders gathered to discuss voluntary cooperation approaches used to curb online drug trafficking.
- In April 2024, the GRIDS Programme National Expert Group Meeting on Postal and Express Courier for Prevention of Dangerous Substance Trafficking was held in Ghana.
- In August 2024, the GRIDS Workshop on Public-Private Partnerships in Thailand for Prevention of Dangerous Substance Trafficking through Exploitation of Money or Value Transfer Service (MVTS) providers was held.
- In September 2024, INCB hosted an operational meeting to counter trafficking of synthetic opioids, dangerous substances and chemicals through postal, express courier, and air cargo services. Experts from governments, express transport sector, and international operational organizations exchanged information on emerging threat and promising practices.

Engagement with other Civil Society Elements

As noted in the "Ministerial Declaration on Accelerating and Strengthening the Global Response to Synthetic Drugs," participating governments expressed their commitment to "taking into account input from civil society in Coalition objectives." The Global Coalition conducted outreach to both domestic and international non-government organizations (NGOs) to ensure their input was evaluated and considered in the formulation of Coalition work.

- In February 2024, the Vienna and New York UN NGO Committees hosted a virtual outreach event to international NGOs. To accommodate a worldwide audience, the New York NGO Committee hosted two events, one geared towards countries in the East and another for those in the West. Each session had just over 100 participants in attendance. These dialogues allowed civil society organizations to express their views on each of the three Working Group topics. Coalition participants joined these meetings to hear civil society organizations share brief statements on Global Coalition topics. The United States, and some other Coalition governments, held a similar consultation at the domestic level.
- Several Sub-Working Group sessions during 2024 included participants from civil society organizations, such as the International Society of Substance Use Professionals (ISSUP) and the International Consortium of Universities for Drug Demand Reduction (ICUDDR).
- In June 2024, all co-chairs of the Global Coalition Working Groups met on the margins of the 9th annual global ISSUP meeting, in Thessaloniki, Greece. ISSUP hosted side events that launched two networks in support of the Global Coalition: the Global Women's Network (GWN) for clinicians providing substance use treatment services to women; and the Global Recovery Network (GRN) for recovery peers and allies.
- The Coalition invited interested civil society organizations to provide videos, presentations, and documents for the Global Coalition's website. This feature remained open through September 2024 and resulted in meaningful recommendations that can be found on the Coalition website.

Engagement with Universities and Academia:

The academic sector is key to ensuring that the challenges of synthetic drugs are prioritized in national research agendas and included in higher education. ICUDDR, with its network of 468 universities from all regions of the world, initiated engagement with university faculty and researchers regarding their views, input, and recommendations on solutions for the Global Synthetics Issue. Their recommendations, developed through six regional focus group meetings, focused on all three areas of the Global Coalition Working Group. ICUDDR organized six presentations to governments on the results. The Final Report from the regional focus group meetings is posted here.

RECOMMENDATIONS, ACTIONS, AND INITIATIVES

Building on Global Coalition fostered exchanges and discussion of existing efforts to address synthetic drug threats, participants developed a list of 68 recommendations to advance through their own efforts and through the Coalition's work (See Appendix III). While the recommendations are not mandatory, Coalition leadership called on participating countries to lead by example with the announcement of actions or commitments such as:

1. Adopting a new practice, policy, regulation, or law;
2. Developing a new unit or institutional reform;
3. Launching a new engagement or collaboration with the private sector;
4. Providing financial support bilaterally, including through international organization partners, or in-kind assistance to build country capacity or advance an initiative addressing a synthetics threat;
5. Expressing interest in specific initiatives, i.e., participating in a global or regional network for collaboration, peer learning, or informational exchange;
6. Hosting a regional or global meeting of the Global Coalition on a thematic area of interest; and/or
7. Any other act to strengthen a country's response to synthetic drugs, consistent with the recommendations.

Global Coalition co-chairs requested participants organize their actions under one of six themes:

1. Expand domestic use of international intelligence sharing platforms (e.g., such as those managed by the International Narcotics Control Board - PICS, PENS, GRIDS, SNOOP) and participate in regional and global enforcement operations. (WG1)
2. Engage and partner with private sector industries to prevent diversion and improve interdiction – particularly in key sectors. (WG1)
3. Ensure each country has an updated drug control strategy and action plan, that has resources for implementation and is evaluated, as well as a designated point of contact for national data collection on drugs empowered to collaborate with international partners. (WG2)
4. Engage legislators in adopting laws that address manufacturing and trafficking, public health measures, and data collection, including by participating in an International Network for Legislation on Drugs. (WG2)
5. Develop national systems of accrediting public health services in addressing substance use (e.g. drug treatment services) as well as the workforce (e.g., certification/credentialing of substance use specialists). (WG3)

6. Expand availability and access to substance use prevention (e.g., family, school, community, media, workplace, environmental), harm reduction, and treatment interventions. (WG3)

The Global Coalition webpage houses a compilation of 120 initiatives (see Appendix IV) that represent potential resources to support or facilitate country action on Global Coalition themes and to foster collaboration. Examples include initiatives focused on: establishing best practice protocols for training narcotics teams to assess, dismantle, and collect evidence from illegal clandestine laboratories/operations accurately and safely; strengthening public-private partnerships and industry cooperation to combat the diversion of precursor chemicals; strengthening national early warning mechanisms on emerging synthetic-drug related threats; building an international network for legislation on drugs, including a pilot program in Latin America and the Caribbean; engaging youth in drug use prevention; workforce development strengthening drug use treatment services; and developing and supporting alternative to incarceration (ATI) systems and networks. To register interest in a particular initiative, Coalition participants may email the point of contact referenced in the text. While implementing organizations will attempt to accommodate government partner interest, an expression of interest is not a guarantee of participation.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the past 18 months, the Global Coalition raised the profile of this issue internationally, garnered remarkable support at the policy level, and generated salient actions to address the threat of synthetic drugs.

Through the efforts of the Global Coalition, the issue of synthetic drug threats has been elevated as an urgent international priority in multilateral fora such as the UN, G7, G20, Organization of American States, African Union, and others.

- At the G20 Foreign Minister's meeting on March 1-2, 2023, and Leader's Summit on September 9-10, 2023, the G20 recognized the shared public health threats posed by synthetic drugs for the first time in its history and committed to enhanced information sharing and capacity building to address these challenges.

- On September 18, 2023, the U.S. Secretary of State convened world leaders for a side event on "Addressing the Public Health and Security Threats of Synthetic Drugs Through Global Cooperation" on the margins of the 78th UNGA. On December 18, the UNGA adopted by consensus a resolution on "Enhancing Action at the National, Regional, and International Levels to Address the Global Public Health and Security Challenges Posed by Synthetic Drugs," recognizing synthetic drug threats as an urgent global priority.

- The Global Coalition built on this momentum by ensuring efforts to address these threats were cemented as a top priority for action in the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs' (CND) mid-term review in March 2024. The CND also for the first time proactively placed controls on substances not yet being used in the illicit manufacture of synthetic drugs but with chemical properties similar to those used for that purpose, a landmark achievement intended to position international controls ahead of traffickers' next likely moves. Additionally, countries voted unanimously to place 23 substances under international control, obligating countries to share information about them and take domestic measures to prevent their diversion and trafficking. Of these, 18 were precursors for synthetic drugs, including two precursors for fentanyl. Finally, the CND adopted a resolution on overdose prevention and response to address the growing number of overdoses associated with synthetic drug use.

- On April 29, 2024, G7 Leaders issued a stand-alone statement on synthetic drug threats acknowledging the Global Coalition's efforts and committing their ministers to undertake concrete efforts to disrupt production and trafficking and respond to public health impacts.

The Coalition's work has had an impact at the national and regional level. For example, the African Union Commission hosted two Global Coalition meetings of drug authorities to discuss drug supply reduction and drug demand reduction strategies for the continent in Madagascar (October 22-25) and Tanzania (December 9-12), respectively. Additionally, the Colombo Plan and OAS/CICAD hosted a Global Coalition meeting of Latin American drug commissions in Buenos Aires, Argentina (December 10-12) in order to develop Lines of Action in the Hemisphere for the next year of the Coalition.

The monthly Sub-Working Group calls placed the world's premiere subject-matter experts in direct contact with one another, with these connections – for the sharing of information, comparing of notes, and alerting on emerging trends – leading to concrete outcomes. Below are a few examples.

Timely sharing of information on emerging trends

- **Helping Identify the Emerging Threat of Liquid Fentanyl:**

  A Sub-Working Group meeting helped identify and raise global awareness of a trend of illicit use of injectable liquid fentanyl. A discussion in one SWG revealed that diverted injectable solutions of pharmaceutical fentanyl had been reported in several African and Latin American countries where illicitly manufactured fentanyl had not yet become established. This frank discussion raised awareness in Coalition countries of this potentially deadly new trend. This discussion motivated a domestic and international response to identify illicit sales of liquid fentanyl, including through the release of a formal international advisory.

- **Addressing Kush in West Africa:**

  Kush is the street name for cannabis adulterated with synthetic drugs such as nitazenes, synthetic cannabinoids, and other substances, and it has become an alarming threat in West Africa. Liberian and Sierra Leonean leadership declared national drug emergencies in 2024, and kush is believed to be present in other countries in the region. Sierra Leone has seen a sharp increase in deaths and requested treatment for kush. Both Sierra Leone and Liberia have inaugurated national plans to increase prevention, treatment, and law enforcement efforts to deal with kush. The Colombo Plan and the U.S. DEA have been active in testing kush and strengthening forensic drug testing capacity in West Africa.

Increased uptake of international tools to detect and disrupt the trafficking of synthetic drugs and creation of new technical resources

- **Targeting Online Sales:**

  Operated by the INCB, a new and powerful tool was piloted in 2024 for law enforcement tracking and identification of online sales of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids: "Scanning Novel Opioids Online Platforms" (SNOOP). Global Coalition members are expected to increasingly use SNOOP to identify and take action on traffickers that offer fentanyl and novel synthetic opioids with no known legitimate uses through web-based marketplaces.

- **Updating Legislative Frameworks:**

  A common refrain throughout many Coalition meetings was, "if only there was a law." In response to this need, UNODC launched the International Network for Legislation on Drugs (INLOD) in December

2024. INLOD will assist national legislatures to address gaps in legal frameworks pertaining to synthetic drugs and precursor chemicals. Complementing UNODC efforts, the Organization of American States/CICAD launched the first pilot program for Latin America and the Caribbean (INLOD-LAC) in December 2024.

Launch of new networks to increase cooperation and capacity

- **Middle East Drug Dialogue:**

  In October 2024, Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, along with the Gulf Cooperation Council, convened a dialogue aimed at discussing synthetic drug threats in the region, identifying challenges, sharing efforts to address drug trafficking, and promoting effective information-sharing between the countries.

- **International Consortium for Alternatives to Incarceration (ICATI):**

  Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) continues to generate increasing interest to reduce prison populations and address substance use for nonviolent persons in the criminal justice system. In March 2024, 55 countries launched the ICATI, with support from UNODC and the OAS. ICATI will provide countries with mentoring and technical assistance in innovating ATI models.

Forging new public-private cooperation

- **Prevent Alliance:**

  In August 2024, the Alliance to Prevent Drug Harms (Prevent Alliance) launched, with participation by the X Corp, Meta, and Snap and support from the United States and UNODC. The initiative will amplify public awareness of the dangers and health risks of synthetic drug misuse. As part of this effort, participants engaged in a technical consultation on lessons learned in social media and drug use prevention.

Country actions

Additionally, many countries have taken new action that reflects heightened prioritization and new channels of cooperation, aligned with Coalition discussions and recommendations. Some indicative examples include:

- Some countries enhanced their interagency coordination and vigilance, such as the country that launched a series of meetings among six government agencies, followed by an internal interagency symposium, to increase planning and coordination on the response to synthetic drugs, or the one that established an Early Warning System (EWS) to identify emerging drug trends and increase cooperation among government entities.

- Other countries have taken important steps on enforcement, such as one that achieved its first dismantling of a fentanyl drug trafficking organization and another that formed a specialized fentanyl prosecutorial unit and requested and received advanced training for prosecutors nationally.

- Some countries are undertaking legislative reforms, such as the jurisdiction that has drafted a new Chemicals Law to strengthen its ability to deter precursor diversion, or the country that is pursuing inclusion of fentanyl in the country's law on dangerous drugs.

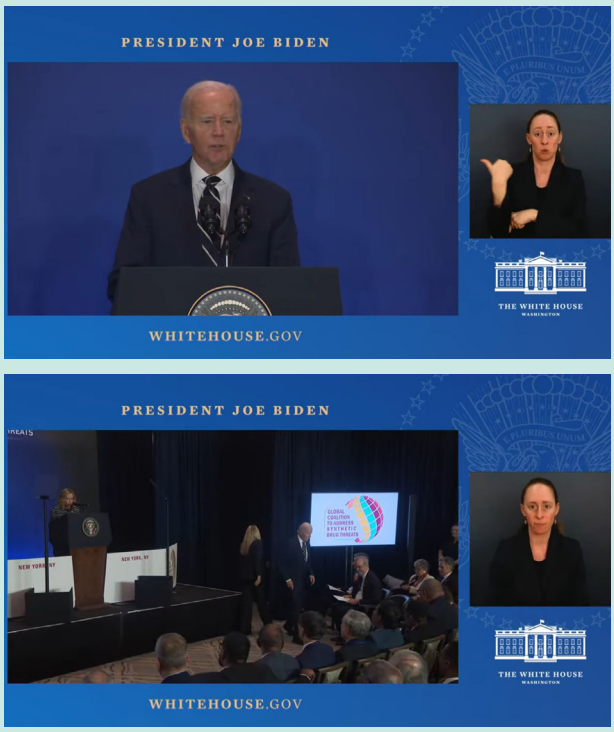
- Some jurisdictions are making their know-how available to Coalition partners, such as the country that opened its domestic training on clandestine labs to others, the regional intergovernmental organization that made virtual reality training on safe handling techniques available, or the country that will work with regional neighbors on sharing approaches to wastewater analysis.

- Countries are seeking out best practices, including from Coalition partners, such as the country tracking increased synthetics use that organized and self-funded a visit to another country to discuss best practices in education, prevention (including online), and enforcement, or the jurisdiction that attended meetings abroad on community-based drug intervention models and is now exploring piloting them at home, or the country that was the site of one of the largest meetings on synthetic drug consumption ever, with participation of over 1,000 officials and experts from the health and security fields.

2024 UNGA AND COUNTRY COMMITMENTS

On September 24, 2024, during the High-Level week of the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, President Biden hosted a Summit of the Global Coalition. World leaders joined in support of the Global Coalition's successful first year, and numerous countries made commitments to lead significant initiatives to further advance the work of each of the Global Coalition's core lines of effort. Additional countries similarly have made commitments in the months since UNGA. Below is a summary of some of those commitments:

- **Argentina** - establish a Regional Center for Synthetic Drug Intelligence and Coordination that would serve as a hub for intelligence-sharing, research, and coordinated regional operations against synthetic drug trafficking.



President Biden Hosted a Summit of the Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats at the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

- **Australia** - lead an initiative with willing Global Coalition partners to increase screening and disruption of the transit routes for synthetic drugs and their precursor chemicals.
- **Belgium** - lead an initiative to disrupt maritime transit routes used to traffic synthetic drugs.
- **Brazil** - expand its pilot EWS on new psychotropic substances and develop regional EWS systems that will include government, civil society, and scientists and universities to strengthen capabilities.
- **Colombia** - lead an initiative to share good practices regionally on forensic laboratories.
- **The Dominican Republic** - lead an initiative focused on the development of coordinated synthetics strategies across the Caribbean to reduce the consumption of synthetic drugs among young people, decrease trafficking in the Caribbean, and strengthen health services and specialize treatment.
- **Guatemala** - pass a regulation that will facilitate the timely scheduling of chemicals and precursors and to schedule five pre-precursor chemicals used to synthesize fentanyl.
- **India** - lead an initiative focused on protecting against the diversion of precursor chemicals for illicit use, to include implementation of effective "know-your-customer" best practices, effective regulation of drugs recommended for scheduling by the UN and other international bodies, and effective oversight over the chemical industry.

- **Italy** - help other Coalition countries to develop EWS to identify emerging drug patterns and will lead an initiative to support Coalition members in developing platforms that provide countries better visibility on the substances contributing to overdose deaths and substance use disorders.
- **The Netherlands** - lead an initiative focused on improving the detection and dismantling of illicit synthetic drug production sites.
- **South Africa** - lead an effort to strengthen forensic capacity and drug data collection techniques in African countries and elevate discussions about countering the synthetic drug threat.
- **United Arab Emirates** - lead an initiative to support prevention and treatment efforts for the overdose epidemic, including expanding public health interventions.
- **United Kingdom** - lead an initiative focused on disrupting the international networks involved in the supply of synthetic drugs, through enhanced legislation and border security.

Since the Summit, countries continue to refine their commitments, new countries are continuing to indicate interest in taking on leadership of complementary efforts, and countries are increasing their coordination on these lines of effort. Several "commitment" countries met jointly with senior U.S. White House and Department of State officials in October 2024 to share updates and pursue collaboration.

At the Summit, President Biden called on all countries participating in the Global Coalition to sign a Coalition Pledge agreeing to take additional actions to regulate all relevant drugs and precursor chemicals, take needed steps to fill gaps in their own domestic authorities, expand public-private partnerships to more effectively combat the supply chain for illicit fentanyl, develop mechanisms to monitor real-time data on trends in illicit drug use, and expand access to treatment. (See Appendix V)

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THE NEXT YEAR OF THE GLOBAL COALITION

The main focus of the Global Coalition moving forward will be a continued emphasis on supporting concrete actions, aligned with the issues and recommendations identified in the first year.

In the coming year, the Global Coalition will emphasize support for further concrete action aligned with the issues and recommendations previously identified. The Working Groups and Sub-Working Groups that defined the first year of the Coalition's work have laid the groundwork for continued collaboration on issues that have emerged as priority "Lines of Action." These Lines of Action will serve as the main form of engagement for Coalition participants over the coming year, drawing from professional communities to build towards additional concrete outcomes. Steering Groups of interested countries, including prior Working Group chairs where applicable, will guide the work under the Lines of Action.

Several countries have made commitments to lead thematic initiatives consistent with the Global Coalition and others have expressed their interest in doing so. These efforts will advance one or more of the Coalition's priority Lines of Action.

Lines of Action may include (but are not limited to) the following issues:

- Private sector action and PPPs
- Intelligence-Sharing Platforms
- Capacity for Sophisticated Cross-Border Enforcement
- Networking of Forensic Labs
- Global Early Warning System
- Universal Data Toolkit
- Updating Legislation
- Expanded Uptake of Universal Training Curriculum for Demand Reduction
- Certification of Addiction Professionals
- Improving Quality of Treatment Services
- Expanding Recovery Services
- Alternatives to Incarceration

In addition to thematic events convened around specific Lines of Action, Coalition participants will continue to meet through 2025 at the regional level to address the unique context of synthetic drug challenges in different parts of the world. These meetings will provide greater depth of discussion on regional dynamics and promote cooperation within regions.

Other Planned Coalition Activities

- **Thought Leaders Symposium:** In order to assess the rapidly changing synthetic drug supply and demand landscape and best inform further efforts, the Coalition will host a meeting in 2025 of government experts from the fields of research, policy, and practice, along with academics and think tank experts. Participants will analyze changing patterns and trends in the counternarcotics field and highlight promising avenues for continued Coalition efforts.
- **Donor coordination:** The Coalition will continue to provide a platform for engaging donors that can address this opportunity for action – without creating costly or complicated new formal mechanisms. The goal is to better share information, increase resources (whether from governments or other donors) to address the gaps, avoid duplication of efforts, and coordinate need identification and planning.
- **Meeting of Working Group 1 Steering Group:** As the Coalition moves forward, the Working Group 1 Steering Group will convene a meeting to discuss operationalizing Working Group 1 Lines of Action to prevent the illicit manufacture and trafficking of synthetic drugs and their precursors.
- Additional regional meetings are planned for Latin American and the Caribbean on drug supply reduction with a focus on air trafficking as well as the first in-person meeting of INLOD-LAC; in the Pacific Islands to discuss manufacturing and trafficking trends in the region and coordinate responses; in Central Asia to discuss drug demand reduction and data collection. For more information, a calendar of upcoming Coalition-related events is available on the Global Coalition website (https://www.globalcoalition.us/calendar-of-events)

CONCLUSIONS

The past 18 months have shown what U.S. leadership and the international community can accomplish when united against a shared threat. The Global Coalition's ability to raise awareness of this urgent global threat and establish a network of subject-matter experts across multiple disciplines offers hope that the synthetic drug threat is within our capabilities to address. To date, the work of the Global Coalition has produced concrete outcomes, such as country actions, new partnerships and networks, and new tools – activity that should increase in the Coalition's second year. The challenges ahead remain significant and will require continued collaborative efforts. We look forward to continuing to work together to make progress in the global effort to address synthetic drug threats.

APPENDICES

I. Ministerial Declaration on Accelerating and Strengthening the Global Response to Synthetic Drugs

See https://www.globalcoalition.us/ministerial-declaration.

Signed by:

Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, European Union, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan

II. UNGA Resolution

United Nations A/RES/78/131 **General Assembly** Distr.: General 21 December 2023

23-25898 (E) 291223 ***2325898***

Seventy-eighth session
Agenda item 125
Global health and foreign policy

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2023
[without reference to a Main Committee (*A/78/L.24)*]

78/131. Enhancing action at the national, regional and international levels to address the global public health and security challenges posed by synthetic drugs

See https://www.globalcoalition.us/files/2024-02/UNGA%20Resolution%20on%20Synthetic%20Drugs.pdf.

III. Recommendations

During Phase III of the Global Coalition, participants collaborated to create a series of 68 overarching recommendations, listed in the link by Sub-Working Group.

Please note, by agreement of the participants, the Recommendations are non-binding, for government consideration where appropriate. They reflect the views of technical experts participating in the Global Coalition and do not reflect a consensus of governments or a single national position.

See https://www.globalcoalition.us/files/2024-05/Global%20Coalition%20to%20Address%20Synthetic%20Drug%20Threats%20%E2%80%93%20Key%20Recommendations.pdf

IV. List of Initiatives

Over the course of the Global Coalition, participants identified over 100 initiatives – resources such as training opportunities, compilations of good practices, a platform for information-sharing – that countries can review and express interest in joining. (Note: due to finite resources, expression of interest does not guarantee access.) They are organized by Sub-Working Group on the Global Coalition website. Some were existing initiatives while others were proposed as a result of Global Coalition discussions.

See https://www.globalcoalition.us/initiatives.

V. Coalition Pledge

Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats: Member Pledge

Launched in July 2023, the Global Coalition to Address Synthetic Drug Threats is an international effort to counter the global threat posed by synthetic drugs, like fentanyl. Under the auspices of the Coalition over 150 countries and international organizations have joined forces to disrupt the illicit production, distribution, and sale of synthetic drugs and their precursors, and the criminal networks that traffic these drugs; detect emerging drug threats; and promote public health interventions to prevent and reduce illicit drug use and associated health-related problems.

In order to further these efforts, we, the following undersigned Coalition members, pledge to take the following actions within our own jurisdictions:

1. Regulate all synthetic drugs and precursors chemicals placed under international control by the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

2. Review relevant policies, regulatory and legal authorities, identify gaps that impede the effort to effectively address the synthetic drug threat, and take appropriate actions to close those gaps.

3. Expand public-private partnerships in the ongoing work to secure supply chains and disrupt drug trafficking, including by encouraging know-your-customer best practices and protecting against illicit activity within the chemical, pharmaceutical, shipping, consignment mail, social media, and financial sectors.

4. Share relevant information regarding suspicious shipments or trafficking of drugs with the appropriate international and regional entities.

5. Develop and expand mechanisms to monitor real-time data on trends in illicit drug use and commit to share that data, as appropriate, regionally and internationally.

6. Expand access to and availability of treatment and other public health measures, including overdose prevention medication, to protect against drug-related illnesses and deaths, and expand training for the public health workforce addressing substance use.

7. Support, as appropriate, international capacity building efforts, consistent with available resources and authorities.

See https://www.globalcoalition.us/files/2024-11/Member%20Pledge.pdf.

VI. Countries Committed to the Pledge

See https://www.globalcoalition.us/pledge.

GLOBAL COALITION TO ADDRESS SYNTHETIC DRUG THREATS

www.globalcoalition.us